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Reply to: **Tampa, Florida**

August 6, 2001

PRESS RELEASE

United States District Judge James S. Moody, Jr. sitting in Tampa, Florida, today sentenced RICHARD OTT, age 39, of South Pasadena, Florida to a term of imprisonment of 6 months, to be followed by a term of one year supervised release, three months of which are to be served under home confinement. District Judge Moody sentenced OTT, a registered pharmacist, on his plea of guilty to nine counts of various forms of prescription fraud, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 843, and remanded OTT today to the custody of the United States Marshal.

The charges in this case stemmed from OTT's activity as the pharmacy supervisor at the Publix Store located at 6850 Gulf Port Boulevard South, St. Petersburg, Florida. During the period between November, 1998 and August, 1999, OTT devised a scheme which allowed him to obtain by deception and fraud various controlled substance pain medications from the Publix pharmacy inventory. His scheme involved the creation of false and fraudulent prescriptions in the names of fictitious persons and the forging of the signatures of local physicians on those prescriptions. By doing so, OTT was able to obtain by fraud and deception over 1,800 tablets of Oxycodone and at least 100 Dilaudid tablets. Both are controlled substance

pain medications.

The charges in this case were investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration's Diversion Unit. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jay L. Hoffer of the Tampa Division.